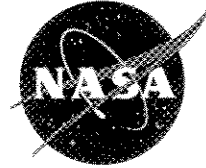


National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Headquarters

Washington, DC 20546-0001



March 8, 2011

Reply to Attn of:

General Law Practice Group

TO: Distribution

FROM: Alternate Designated Agency Ethics Official

SUBJECT: Widely-Attended Gathering Determination Regarding Attendance by NASA Employees at the 54th Annual Goddard Memorial Dinner on April 1, 2011

On April 1, 2011, the National Space Club (NSC), a non-profit organization under 501(c)(6), will hold its 54th annual Dr. Robert H. Goddard Memorial Dinner at the Hilton Washington Hotel in Washington, D.C. The objectives of the NSC are to foster policies and programs necessary to establish and maintain United States space leadership, and to stimulate the advancement and application of space flight and related technologies. The Goddard Memorial Dinner is recognized as a premiere event in the aerospace community, and brings together national leaders to pay tribute to the recipient of the Goddard Trophy, which is given annually at the event "for great achievement in advancing space flight programs contributing to United States leadership in astronautics." In addition, other awards and fellowships are presented during the dinner to recognized leaders in the aerospace community and to students with exceptional achievements in aerospace-related disciplines.

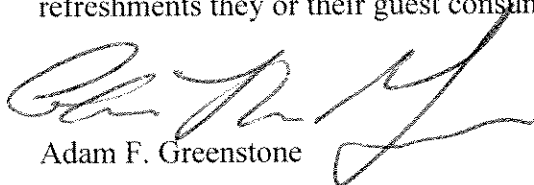
The event, which consists of a reception followed by dinner and dancing, will be attended by representatives of the legislative branch, academia, industry, non-profit organizations, NASA and other agencies of the Federal government. Approximately, 5000 people have been invited and around 2,200 people are expected to attend. The NSC is composed of representatives of industry, government, educational institutions, and private individuals to enhance the exchange of current information on astronautics. A current list of NSC corporate members is available at <http://www.spaceclub.org/about/corporate.html>. The NSC's charter strictly prohibits lobbying activities. As in prior years, the NSC will invite the government invitees, and will also assign seating at tables. The estimated cost of the event, which includes all food and beverages, is \$300.00 per person. I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 C.F.R. § 2635.204(g).

I further determine that there is an Agency interest in having NASA personnel attend the event because it will further NASA programs and operations. The event will give NASA employees the opportunity to discuss U.S. space policy, and a variety of other issues related to NASA and its programs, with other attendees. Accordingly, NASA employees whose duties do not substantially affect the NSC or a majority of its members, including employees in non-career positions subject to the Ethics Pledge required by Executive Order 13490, may accept an invitation for free attendance to the NSC dinner dance and reception for themselves and an invited guest.

However, NASA employees whose duties may substantially affect the event sponsor or a majority of its members, such as by way of procurement duties, should seek an individual determination pursuant to 5 C.F.R. § 2635.205(g)(3)(i) regarding participation in this event from their local ethics counselor.

Corporate Hospitality Suites. This determination does not include the ten or so receptions hosted by corporate sponsors in hospitality suites.¹ These hospitality suites are coordinated by the NSC as a matter of courtesy, but are not otherwise a part of the official Goddard Memorial dinner dance and reception. NASA personnel should observe the exception to the gift rules that allows acceptance of gifts (including free refreshments and tangible gifts) with an aggregate value of \$20 or less per event from a single source, not to exceed \$50 per year from that source. Gifts to an employee's spouse or guest are treated as gifts to the employee for purposes of these gift limitations. NASA employees invited to and desiring to attend these associated corporate receptions may accept free refreshments if the fair market value of the food and drink consumed is less than \$20. If \$20 or more is consumed, the employee should personally provide that amount to the corporate host as reimbursement.

Moreover, while non-career employees subject to the Ethics Pledge required by Executive Order 13490 may accept free attendance at the NSC's reception and dinner dance, they must reimburse the corporate sponsors at any hospitality suite for the fair market value of any refreshments they or their guest consume.²



Adam F. Greenstone

¹ According to the NSC, the corporate reception sponsors at the hospitality suites are: Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, ITT, Northrop, ASRC Federal, General Dynamics, ATK, Teledyne Brown and Ball.

² Reimbursement may be provided by placing money reflecting a good faith estimate of the value of the refreshments consumed in an "honor basket," if one is present within the applicable suite.